

(Washington, DC) Today, Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) introduced legislation to honor the late Lena Horne with a Congressional Gold Medal for her outstanding contributions to American culture and the Civil Rights Movement. Ms. Horne passed away in New York City on May 9, 2010 at the age of 92. **(Please find attached a copy of the bill)**

“Ms. Lena Horne was an extraordinarily talented and beautiful woman who entertained America and broke racial barriers as a singer, dancer, and actress for over 60 years,” said Hastings.

Horne danced in the chorus of Harlem’s famous Cotton Club, was one of the first African American women to tour with an all-white band, Charlie Barnet’s jazz band, and became the first black artist to sign a long-term contract with a major studio, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). She also starred in such musicals as *Cabin in the Sky*, *Stormy Weather*, and *The Wiz*, as well as numerous television specials and variety shows. In 1981, Horne captivated audiences with her one-woman Broadway show, *Lena Horne: The Lady and Her Music*, which earned her a special Tony Award and two Grammy Awards.

“Ms. Horne refused to give up her dreams and fought racial discrimination in film and television and onstage,” further noted Hastings.

During McCarthyism in the 1950s, Horne was blacklisted as a communist because of her activism and, in 1963, she participated in the historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, at which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his immortal “I Have a Dream” speech. Throughout her career, Horne worked with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Council of Negro Women, Delta Sigma Theta sorority, and the Urban League as a powerful voice for civil rights and equality.

“My thoughts and prayers go out to Ms. Horne’s daughter, Ms. Gail Lumet Buckley, and the rest of her family and friends at this most difficult time.”

The Congressional Gold Medal has been bestowed by Congress since 1776 in order to express public gratitude for the most distinguished contributions on behalf of the nation.

Joining Congressman Hastings as original co-sponsor are (21): Representatives Anh “Joseph” Cao (LA), Raul Grijalva (AZ), Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC), Bennie Thompson (MS), John Lewis (GA), Diane Watson (CA), C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (MD), Yvette Clarke (NY), Corrine Brown (FL), Marcia L. Fudge (OH), Kendrick Meek (FL), Sheila Jackson Lee (TX), Carolyn Kilpatrick (MI), Donna M. Christensen (VI), Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (VA), Danny Davis (IL), Charles B. Rangel (NY), Dana Rohrabacher (CA), Artur Davis (AL), Gregory Meeks (NY), and John Conyers, Jr. (MI).

Congressman Alcee L. Hastings is Vice Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, a senior member of the House Rules Committee, and Co-Chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission.

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 [Rep Alcee L Hastings Lena Horne Bill 5.20.2010.pdf](#)